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Current situation with respect to regional and subregional cooperation in countering drug trafficking

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Report of the Secretariat

I. Introduction

1. Since the Twenty-seventh Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Africa, held in Hurghada, Egypt, from 18 to 22 September 2017, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has continued to formulate and implement programmes to address problems related to drugs and organized crime in Africa. Trafficking in drugs, and other forms of organized crime, continue to affect economic and social development in many parts of Africa. The situation is exacerbated by other factors, including wars and intra-State conflicts, the after-effects of the uprisings in North Africa, weaknesses in the social and criminal justice system, corruption, limited opportunities for young people and disparities in income levels, all of which provide ample opportunity for the activities of organized criminal syndicates in the region. Moreover, over the past few years, countries in Africa have increasingly been affected by global drug trafficking routes, including the cocaine route from Latin America and the southern route for Afghan opiates towards Eastern Africa. A comprehensive response and strong international cooperation are required to counter both the illicit drug flows trafficked along these routes and the increasing challenges that the use of the routes contribute as spill-over effects to domestic drug markets. Furthermore, government sources increasingly show linkages between drug trafficking and terrorist groups, in particular with regard to the use of proceeds of the illicit drug trade to finance terrorist activities.

* Available only in Arabic, English and French, which are the working languages of the subsidiary body.

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II. Africa-wide initiatives

2. UNODC continued to support the implementation of the African Union Plan of Action on Drug Control and Crime Prevention 2013–2017 and has been providing technical assistance to countries of the African Union in the areas covered by the Action Plan, as described in detail in the following chapters.

3. UNODC initiatives addressing drug trafficking across the continent included the UNODC/World Customs Organization (WCO) Container Control Programme, which supported the establishment of joint port control units in countries across Africa, and the Airport Communication Project (AIRCOP), which continues to expand from its initial area of operation in West Africa and Latin America to other parts of Africa, including Ethiopia, Kenya and Mozambique.

III. West Africa

4. UNODC continued to provide support to Member States in West Africa under the Regional Programme for West Africa (2016–2020), which is aligned with the new Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Regional Action Plan to Combat Illicit Drug Trafficking, Organized Crime and Drug Abuse in West Africa. The Programme takes into account the priorities identified in the new Plan of Action and contributes to its implementation. It also serves as a framework for regional and national activities, as well as for use in promoting cooperation to counter drug trafficking and supporting Member States in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals contained therein.

5. Cocaine trafficking remains a major concern for West Africa. The main modes of transport have evolved to include air assets (including couriers and parcels), a trend that is likely linked to the increased number of flights between South America and West Africa. Recent reports have also suggested that that trend would continue to evolve since the prevalence of drug consumption in West Africa was increasing.

6. Since the inception of AIRCOP projects, cocaine seizures in West Africa have amounted to 1.9 tons, with 140 kg having been seized during the reporting period.

7. Methamphetamine seizures at African airports participating in AIRCOP have reached levels similar to cocaine seizures (1.6 tons and 1.9 tons, respectively), with the airports in Lagos, Nigeria, and Cotonou, Benin, accounting for the largest share. In 2017, the Joint Airport Interdiction Task Force in Accra seized 54.5 kg of methamphetamine en route to South Africa via Addis Ababa. The courier was a South African national.

8. Seizures of heroin are on the rise with the airports in Lagos, Accra and Cotonou topping the list, followed by the airports in Bamako, Lomé and Ouagadougou. Of the airports mentioned, the largest number of seizures of precursors (including ephedrine and phenacetine) were recorded at Lagos and Cotonou airports, which could indicate the existence of laboratories for the manufacture of new psychoactive substances in Africa. Of all the airports in Africa, Cotonou was among the top three for seizures of methamphetamine, heroin and precursors. Approximately 65 per cent of the drug couriers arrested were Nigerian nationals, and Ethiopian Airlines was the air carrier in Africa most often used by drug couriers.

9. In 2017, the Joint Airport Interdiction Task Force in Lagos made a seizure of ephedrine that included nearly 26.66 kg en route to Mozambique, 26.2 kg en route to Tanzania and more than 75 kg en route to South Africa. All the couriers arrested in relation to the seizure were Nigerian nationals.

10. With regard to post-seizure investigation, the joint airport interdiction task forces are not in charge of judicial investigations. With the support of the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), UNODC set up a specialized curriculum to provide training for agents and sensitize them to good practices related to

post-seizure investigations. Such training activities took place in Lagos and Niamey. A national prosecutor from the Niger took part in the training course in Niamey. In Mali, a national prosecutor was present at a mentoring session for the Bamako task force. AIRCOP also cooperated with the global programme on the strengthening of criminal investigation and criminal justice along the cocaine route in Latin America, the Caribbean and West Africa (CRIMJUST) to select seizures cases and support countries throughout the investigation process.

11. The European Union funded a project implemented by UNODC, entitled "Response to drugs and related organized crime in Nigeria", under which support continued to be provided to Nigerian national counterparts and States members of ECOWAS. Since 2015, in collaboration with the Regional Office for West Africa, four regional intelligence forums on drug-related crime were held, involving representatives from 11 West African countries, as well as Brazil and Japan. In the follow-up to these forums and in partnership with the Cocaine Route Programme of the European Union, three planning meetings were held in the first half of 2018 between drug investigation agencies from Ghana and Nigeria, which led to successful joint operations between the two countries in May and June 2018. Since 2015, through the project, UNODC has delivered 119 law enforcement courses involving over 2,700 officers from 7 different agencies in Nigeria. Course topics included criminal investigation, intelligence, training of law enforcement officials, prosecutions, money-laundering and law enforcement.

12. The Container Control Programme has project sites in Africa, Central and South America, and Central and South Asia. The core of the initiative is the establishment of inter-agency joint port control units that include customs, police and other structures, such as gendarmerie and drug law enforcement agencies. In West Africa, the Programme provided support for units in Benin, Ghana, Senegal and Togo.

13. UNODC continued to provide support to dedicated inter-agency transnational organized crime units. The Transnational Organized Crime Unit in Sierra Leone is fully operational and has registered very good results to date. Since its establishment in August 2010, the Unit has investigated 649 cases, resulting in the prosecution of 410 criminals. The Unit conducts regular operations in vulnerable areas and has good outreach in the country, even at sea. It has participated in several international investigations on transnational organized crimes, and has conducted joint operations and exchanges of intelligence with the Transnational Organized Crime Unit in Liberia.

14. The Transnational Organized Crime Unit in Liberia is also fully operational. Since its establishment in June 2011, the Unit has participated in or conducted investigations into 136 criminal cases. A comprehensive package of capacity-building activities has been delivered, along with logistical and operational support.

15. The Transnational Organized Crime Unit in Cote d'Ivoire became operational in 2017 and recorded promising results, including participation in 228 operations and the interviewing of 424 suspects. In addition, the Unit assisted in the seizure of 60 tons of counterfeit medicines, 50 kg of cannabis, 2 kg of cocaine, 20 m^3 of protected vene wood and endangered species of wild fauna and flora — including 3 tons of pangolin scale — worth over 100 million West African francs. Two clandestine laboratories involved in the manufacture of counterfeit medicines were dismantled and several suspects arrested in February 2017.

16. The Transnational Organized Crime Unit in Guinea-Bissau became operational in June 2011. Since then, proactive investigations based on intelligence-gathering (intelligence-led policing) have been carried out in partnership with the judicial police, resulting in investigations into 70 cases of drug trafficking, the prosecution of 133 persons and the seizure of 71 kg of cocaine and 1,353 kg of marijuana.

17. In 2017, in the framework of the UNODC technical assistance project funded by the United States of America to assist the authorities of Ghana in countering drug trafficking and organized crime, an investigations handbook for drug law enforcement

in Ghana was developed. UNODC trained members of staff and equipped new regional drug law enforcement units in Ghana, which will report to the Ghana Police Service Criminal Investigations Department.

18. In 2017, UNODC launched a new project to enhance national capacities to detect and investigate cross-border organized crime in the Gambia, Guinea-Bissau and Senegal. The initiative represents an opportunity to foster stronger regional cooperation and coordination of law enforcement authorities to provide an effective response to transnational organized crime and drug trafficking in West Africa.

19. In Senegal, under the UNODC-WHO Joint Programme on Drug Dependence Treatment and Care, the UNODC contribution, together with financial support from France and funding from other partners, such as the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, helped to build a comprehensive addiction treatment centre (CEPIAD) in Dakar. After three years of operations, a total of 1,112 drug users had been registered to receive treatment. In addition, 339 injecting drug users — 88 per cent of whom were heroin users — had been enrolled in the opioid maintenance programme with methadone intake as substitution therapy. Pharmacological treatment services were initiated, along with management of comorbidities related to drug abuse, HIV prevention and care and harm reduction activities. CEPIAD has a multidisciplinary team and is also linked to a network of social workers and community volunteers developing outreach activities and referral interventions.

20. In the framework of its project to support the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan to Combat Illicit Drug Trafficking, Organized Crime and Drug Abuse in West Africa, UNODC and ECOWAS organized a workshop on building the capacity of civil society organizations for substance use prevention and care in ECOWAS member States and Mauritania, held in Abuja from 7 to 9 January 2018. The workshop provided skills and knowledge to develop and carry out effective evidence-based prevention interventions among vulnerable populations, including children and young people. The meeting also provided an opportunity for 32 representatives of civil society in West Africa to share best practices on data collection with regard to the implementation of prevention interventions. At the end of the meeting, focal points of civil society organizations from the member States of ECOWAS called for the establishment of the West African Network of Civil Society on Substance Abuse to better coordinate their efforts towards drug prevention and treatment in the region.

21. In 2017, as part of the implementation of the above-mentioned project, UNODC, ECOWAS and the European Union provided grants in support of innovative pilot prevention initiatives in four countries (Burkina Faso, Liberia, Mauritania and Sierra Leone). Pilot prevention projects having potential for replication within the region were selected and funded. UNODC provided technical assistance to the beneficiaries (civil society organizations) to develop prevention activities that complied with international guidelines and standards. UNODC also organized formative supervisions for the grantees with a focus on international norms and standards for the prevention of drug use, with a focus on youth and high-risk groups.

22. UNODC supported the establishment of university curricula to train specialists in addiction and promoted an approach that was sensitive to public health and human rights. As a result of these sustained efforts, in February 2018, the first university degree in addictology in West Africa was established by the faculty of medicine of the Cheikh Anta Diop University in Dakar. The main objective of the programme is to improve the quality of human resources involved in the health care of drug users, in particular with respect to their human rights, and to help bring about change in therapeutic methods by popularizing addictology in Senegal and in the region.

23. In 2017, in the framework of the UNODC-WHO Joint Programme on Drug Dependence Treatment and Care, UNODC continued to provide support for national consultations organized in Côte d'Ivoire on the revision of the legal and administrative framework regarding drug issues. The main objective of the reform was to promote a health-centred approach to drug control. The new version of the country's 1988 drug law was finalized by national experts with the technical support

of UNODC and the draft was submitted to the Ministry of the Interior and to the Parliament for validation. UNODC also provided technical support to West and Central African countries during several national and regional consultations in the lead-up to the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem held in 2016.

24. As part of the European Union-funded UNODC project on the response to drugs and related organized crime in Nigeria, progress was made in the areas of drug use prevention, treatment and care, including achievements in the following areas:

(a) Development of national minimum standards for drug dependence treatment;

(b) Development of standard policy and practice guidelines on drug counselling;

(c) Development of community-based drug treatment guidelines;

(d) Creation and support of 11 model drug treatment centres, and five community drug treatment service centres;

(e) Training of over 1,500 health professionals in drug treatment and counselling;

(f) Establishment of the Nigerian Epidemiological Network on Drug Use (NENDU), routinely collecting data on clients presenting for drug treatment, with annual reports produced for 2015, 2016 and 2017;

(g) Adaptation and randomized control trial of a school-based drug use prevention programme in 32 schools, entitled "Unplugged", with the analysis demonstrating positive impacts, followed by the expansion of the programme in 2017 and 2018;

(h) Adaptation and training on the family-focused drug use prevention programme entitled "Strengthening Families Programme";

(i) Development of a drug sensitization training programme and the delivery of 11 sessions to 284 law enforcement officers;

(j) Development of a school-based drug sensitization programme;

(k) Completion of the first national drug use survey in Nigeria, with the publication of results expected in September 2018.

25. The *World Drug Report 2017* reported that the largest worldwide seizures of pharmaceutical opioids were recorded in Africa, most notably in West and Central Africa, where large amounts of tramadol were seized. Benin was the second-largest recipient of registered commercial shipments from India of tramadol, destined for the Sahel, where local levels of consumption and abuse were high. The most directly affected populations included teenagers and young adults seeking the "high" caused by illicit drugs; manual labourers and professional drivers looking for an "extra kick" to sustain them through long work hours; and people suffering from mental or physical diseases who misuse the substances as a means of self-medicating. Acknowledging this increasing menace, UNODC is organizing a regional workshop on the crisis involving tramadol and other prescription medicines in West Africa, which will be convened in 2018 to identify the challenges involved and seek solutions.

26. During the period 2016–2017, the UNODC-supported network of West African Central Authorities and Prosecutors (WACAP) implemented a train-the-trainer course on international judicial cooperation and adult learning methodology that benefited 113 practitioners of all WACAP member States. The trainees then transferred their knowledge to their national peers. In total, 333 prosecutors, judges and law enforcement officers benefited from the training activity and, as a result, were better equipped to investigate and prosecute transnational organized crime cases. WACAP regularly cooperates with CRIMJUST and recently participated in training courses on international cooperation and the effective investigation and prosecution of organized

crime and drug trafficking cases, which benefited officials of Ghana and Nigeria. The courses were held in September 2017 (Nigeria), March 2018 (Ghana) and July 2018 (Nigeria).

27. Within the framework of resolution 8/1 of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, entitled "Enhancing the effectiveness of central authorities in international cooperation in criminal matters to counter transnational organized crime", UNODC organized a two-day informal expert group meeting in Vienna on 5 and 6 October 2017. WACAP encourages all member States to enhance the effectiveness of their central authorities in order to successfully deal with incoming and outgoing requests for international cooperation in criminal matters.

28. In August 2017, WACAP launched an initiative to address the issue of countering violent extremism in the context of criminal justice sector responses and its collaboration with civil society in Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, the Niger and Senegal. The focus was put on promotion and enhancement of collaboration and information-sharing with criminal justice actors. A conference was held in March 2018 in Dakar, where the findings of the study were discussed among the participants and the Dakar Call to Action was drafted, with the aim of providing concrete recommendations for Governments, criminal justice systems and civil society.

29. In 2018, as part of the PROMIS project, WACAP began coordinating with the Global Maritime Crime Programme of UNODC on an initiative to enhance international judicial cooperation by sponsoring the deployment of a magistrate from a country in West Africa to a country in Europe as a means of facilitating mutual legal assistance on transnational organized crime cases, in particular those cases related to smuggling of migrants. The UNODC Regional Office for West and Central Africa supported the deployment of a Nigerian prosecutor to Italy for 5 months, with the aim of developing direct contact between the respective central authorities and improving collaboration on ongoing cases. Within the framework of WACAP and the PROMIS project, sponsored magistrates could be posted within the region of West Africa or in a country in Europe in order to facilitate the sharing of information on pending cases. The initiative would strengthen mutual legal assistance, provide magistrates with first-hand knowledge of organized crime trends in both countries or regions and enable direct communication between prosecutors and investigators of the host country and the country of origin.

30. WACAP and the knowledge management portal known as Sharing Electronic Resources and Laws on Crime (SHERLOC) started a new collaboration on collecting information on national jurisprudence and cases on organized crime as well as mutual legal assistance and extradition laws. UNODC aims to gather successful cases of international or regional cooperation from the region of West Africa, which led to the prosecution of offences, and include them into the SHERLOC case law database.

IV. Central Africa

31. UNODC activities in Central Africa continue to be severely limited by a lack of resources. However, remarkable progress was made in the framework of an AIRCOP project that was implemented in Cameroon at Douala and Yaoundé airports to better tackle trafficking of drugs and other substances in the region. The officers of the joint airport interdiction task forces in Douala and Yaoundé took part in several training activities in order to enhance their capabilities in the fight against drug trafficking by air. Both task forces are now operational.

32. Since their operationalization, the joint airport interdiction task forces in Cameroon have seized 20 kg of cocaine, 100 kg of methamphetamine, 27 kg of amphetamine, 37 kg of cigarettes and other tobacco products, 680 kg of counterfeit or illicit medicines and 555 kg of khat.

V. Southern Africa

33. In recent years, Southern Africa has become an increasingly important transit hub for opiates trafficked by air from West Asia, with the United Republic of Tanzania serving as one of the main transit countries.

34. Several cases of heroin smuggled from Pakistan en route to the United States were recorded. In June 2017, police in South Africa seized 963 kg of heroin in a wine estate, the largest seizure ever recorded in that country. In addition, the joint airport interdiction task forces operational in West Africa have to date seized more than 48 kg of heroin being trafficking by air from Southern Africa.

35. Cocaine seizures were also on the rise. In 2017, 480 kg of cocaine en route to or from Southern Africa were seized by the joint airport interdiction task forces established by AIRCOP in West Africa and Latin America. At Guarulhos International Airport in São Paulo, Brazil, 207 kg of cocaine en route to Johannesburg, South Africa, were seized.

36. Trafficking in methamphetamine was also increasing. From 2011 to 2017, the joint airport interdiction task forces in Africa intercepted 403 kg of methamphetamine en route to Southern Africa. Since the beginning of 2018, the joint airport interdiction task forces of Lagos and Cotonou have intercepted 20 kg of methamphetamine en route to Johannesburg and 34.5 kg en route to Maputo. Southern Africa was also affected by the diversion of chemical precursors, including ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, which are used in the illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants.

37. In 2018, Mozambique became member of AIRCOP and law enforcement officials at Maputo International Airport received training to improve understanding of law enforcement concepts and techniques, as well as the itineraries and modus operandi of drug traffickers. The training activity also covered relevant legal frameworks and professional human rights-based standards of privacy and integrity, in performing interdiction and investigation functions. During the training activity, operations were undertaken as part of the practical work and law enforcement officials at the airport made three seizures: one of undeclared diamonds from a national of China and two of cocaine from nationals of Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria. The training activity was the first step towards the establishment of the Joint Airport Interdiction Task Force in Maputo, which will form part of AIRCOP.

38. In 2017, UNODC continued to support the Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network for Southern Africa (ARINSA), which provides support to the network of practitioners working in the field of proceeds of crime and asset forfeiture. The Network provides a platform for countries to trace and confiscate the proceeds of all major crimes, including drug trafficking. The Network also facilitates information requests for international and regional mutual legal assistance related to all major crimes, including drug trafficking.

39. Through the Network, over $47,300,000 worth of assets were seized or forfeited by member States in 2017, as reported by those States on the Network's secured information platform. A total of 30 prosecutors from member States of the Network benefitted from the prosecutor placement programme at the National Prosecution Authority of South Africa, which provided the opportunity to exchange experiences and best practices related to following proceeds of crime in criminal and civil cases. Through the mentorship programmes in Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mozambique, Namibia, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, prosecutorial and other relevant national authorities received hands-on expert support in dealing with real-life cases. A total of 641 judges, magistrates, prosecutors, rangers, financial investigators and law enforcement officials from Network member States were trained through regional and national workshops, as well as judicial retreats on anti-money-laundering, cybercrime, terrorist financing, beneficiary ownership, basic techniques for financial investigations and following the proceeds of wildlife crime.

40. UNODC produced a guidebook on following the wildlife crime money chain for first responders and front-line officers who are responsible for addressing a wide variety of profit-driven wildlife crimes. The guidebook will provide a solid basis for first responders to ensure that the evidence they have identified and preserved can be used to carry out further investigations, including following the money trail to uncover and disrupt the illegal activities of organized wildlife crime syndicates. The guidebook is scheduled to be launched in August 2018.

VI. East Africa

41. UNODC continued to provide support under the second phase of its Regional Programme for East Africa for the period 2016–2021, entitled "Promoting the rule of law and human security". Drug trafficking, trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants, illicit financial flows and the use of transport networks for trafficking, including maritime crime, are priority areas under the countering transnational organized crime and trafficking pillar. Under the Programme, cooperation to counter drug trafficking is promoted, and Member States are supported in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals contained therein.

42. From 27 November to 1 December 2017, UNODC and the Government of Kenya hosted an interregional conference on countering the world drug problem. At the meeting, participants from East Africa, Latin America and key countries in Africa and West Asia exchanged views on challenges and lessons learned in countering drug abuse and drug trafficking, with the aim of improving national and regional responses by fostering cooperation and promoting a balanced approach that addresses the supply of illicit drugs and the health and social consequences of drug use. A concluding ministerial segment resulted in an outcome document containing several recommendations to better address the drug problem in East Africa.

43. Following the 2016 high-level meeting of interior ministers of the Indian Ocean region on the subject of countering drug trafficking, held in Colombo, and the adoption of the Colombo Declaration, UNODC continued to actively cooperate with the members of the partnership. The Declaration called upon the littoral States of the Indian Ocean to meet on an annual basis within the framework of the Southern Route Partnership of the Indian Ocean Forum on Maritime Crime to assess and report on the drug trafficking threats in the Indian Ocean and develop a coordinated approach to counter such threats.

44. The Southern Route Partnership provides a coordination platform for national drug enforcement agencies and international partners to identify priority areas and coordinate support that enhances common objectives. It also provides a platform for regular engagement and the conduct of research on the southern route, including the collation of statistical data.

45. During the period under review, coordination efforts of the Southern Route Partnership and networking among drug enforcement agencies in the region resulted in major drug seizures in Kenya, Madagascar and the United Republic of Tanzania. In the United Republic of Tanzania, 111 kg of heroin was seized in October 2017 and another 64 kg in December 2017. In Madagascar, 140 kg of multiple types of drugs were seized, including 18 kg of heroin, in June 2018. It is believed that those seized narcotics were trafficked using maritime routes. In Kenya, 10 kg of heroin was seized in March 2018.

46. The Southern Route Partnership was identified as the primary mechanism to counter trafficking in narcotic drugs in the Indian Ocean at the Ministerial Meeting of the Indian Ocean Commission, held in Mauritius from 26 to 29 April 2018. The ministerial declaration was adopted, which called upon the littoral States of the Indian Ocean to coordinate a drug control initiative within the framework of the Partnership.

47. Various forms of maritime crime, including drug trafficking, take place along the coastal border between Kenya and Somalia. Through its Global Maritime Crime Programme, UNODC continued to engage with the Maritime Police Unit in Lamu, Kenya, with a view to re-establishing cooperation once funding becomes available. In previous years, UNODC provided support through the delivery of training courses developed specifically to build capacity to effectively fight maritime crime, including drug interdiction. In addition, specialized training was offered on specific crimes in the maritime environment, including drug trafficking, through practical exercises in "visit, board, search and seizure" procedures at sea in order to identify the smuggling of narcotics in hidden compartments. The programme also focused on improving communication capabilities between the Maritime Police Unit and the Rural Border Patrol Unit to ensure coordination between land- and sea-based operations.

48. Port control units implemented under the Container Control Programme in East Africa are now operational in Kenya at the port of Mombasa, in the United Republic of Tanzania at the port of Dar es Salaam, and in Uganda at the dry port of Kampala. An expert from the Programme has been deployed on a permanent basis to East Africa to undertake monitoring of all units in the region and support the provision of on-the-job training. Drug test kits have been provided to these units in order to strengthen detection capabilities, with a view to tackling drug trafficking in the region.

49. Training was provided in Uganda from 21 to 25 May 2018, and in Kenya from 18 to 27 July 2018. The training activities were aimed at the establishment of air cargo control units at Entebbe International Airport and Jomo Kenyatta International Airport.

50. Within the context of AIRCOP, UNODC initiated work at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport with a capacity-building training for the operationalization of the joint airport interdiction task force, with the aim of building capacity for the detection and interdiction of trafficking by passenger flows. Task forces were also being established in Ethiopia and Mozambique.

51. An interregional training workshop on international understanding and disrupting illicit financial flows associated with the southern route for opiate trafficking was organized by UNODC and held in Zanzibar, Tanzania, from 27 February to 3 March 2017. The workshop was aimed at strengthening cooperation across the regions.

52. UNODC continued to work in the region on comprehensively addressing HIV/AIDS and drug use prevention. Its work also focused on treatment, care and support among people who use drugs and people who inject drugs , including people in prison settings. In that context, the Office started the implementation of a programme that was aimed at reducing morbidity and mortality among people who use drugs and people who inject drugs in Kenya. In the first half of 2018, there were over 2,000 people who used drugs, including injecting drug users, who received methadone substitution therapy in four opioid substitution treatment clinics in the coastal regions of Kenya. Plans to set up a fifth clinic are already under way, and it is estimated that the facility will be operational in Lamu county by late 2018.

53. UNODC successfully conducted a substance use assessment among junior ranked police officers (constable, corporal and sergeants) in seven counties in Kenya. The assessment was led by the Kenyan National Police Service.

54. In 2017, UNODC provided support to authorities in Ethiopia and Mauritius in the development of a national drug control master plan for those countries.

VII. North Africa

55. UNODC continued to support countries in North Africa through the Regional Programme for the Arab States to Prevent and Combat Crime, Terrorism and Health Threats and Strengthen Criminal Justice Systems, in line with International Human Rights Standards (2016–2021). Launched in May 2016, the Programme takes into

account the new set of challenges faced by the North Africa and Middle East region, while ensuring close cooperation with the League of Arab States and its member States.

56. In 2018, the political and security situation in the North Africa and Middle East region continues to be shaped by several crises. The ongoing conflicts in Iraq, Libya, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen have detrimental consequences for both the citizens of those countries and those of the neighbouring countries.

57. Cocaine trafficking remains a major concern for North Africa. The main modes of transport have evolved since the publication of the 2017 report of the International Narcotics Control Board, with an increase in the use of maritime assets. That trend is likely to be related to the increase in the global manufacture of pure cocaine hydrochloride in recent years.

58. During the reporting period, there have been indications of increased seizures of cocaine. For example, according to the Ministry of the Interior of Morocco, seizures of cocaine increased by 128 per cent in 2017, compared with 2016. The most significant seizure took place in October 2017, with the interception of 2.58 tons of cocaine en route from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. In November 2017, the customs and security forces of Morocco seized 15 kg of cocaine and 10 kg of heroin en route from Belgium.

59. Airports in North Africa continue to be used as a mode of transportation by cocaine traffickers according to seizures reported during the period 2017–2018. According to the database on illicit drug seizures with relation to European airports (IDEAS), in September 2017 a Lithuanian national was arrested in France with 2 kg of cocaine, en route from Casablanca, Morocco. In November 2017, a Portuguese national was arrested at Orly airport (France) after arriving from Casablanca with over 3 kg of cocaine.

60. In recent years, Afghan heroin continued to reach the Middle East, despite the increasing number of small heroin seizures in North African countries. The security forces in Morocco seized 21.84 kg of heroin in 2017, compared with 16.19 kg in 2016, representing a 34 per cent increase. The authorities in Algeria indicated that the amount of heroin seized in that country in 2017 went up by 51 per cent compared with 2016, reaching 2.2 kg.

61. During the reporting period, the largest volume of heroin intercepted in the region was seized in Safaga, Egypt, on the Red Sea coast, in early 2018. Four months earlier, the Ministry of the Interior of Egypt seized 200 kg of heroin and 10 kg of crystalline methamphetamine at the same location.

62. Trafficking in tramadol in North Africa is thriving, with most of the product originating in India. During the reporting period, several tons of tramadol destined for Libya were seized, both within the region and en route from several countries, including Greece, Italy and Turkey.

63. Cannabis seizures in North Africa, particularly in Algeria and Morocco, have declined substantially over the past three years.

64. In 2017, there was a significant decrease in cannabis seizures at European ports. That decrease was mainly owing to the reinforcement of control measures at some seaports in North Africa, including Beni Ensar, Morocco, which led to the failure of cannabis smuggling attempts. Seizures of cannabis resin and cocaine continued in 2018, with several seizures of both drugs having been made by the authorities of Italy and Morocco, both at seaports and airports, as they were being transited through smuggling networks.

65. Trafficking in cannabis resin by land extended into the Sahel countries, including the Niger. A vehicle loaded with 72 kg of cannabis resin, originating in Nigeria, was seized by the police in the Niger. The smugglers were intending to reach Libya through Agadez, a prominent transit point in the Niger for smuggling operations.

66. Amphetamine from West Africa is being transited through North Africa on its way to Europe or East Asia with greater frequency. According to the IDEAS database, three Nigerian nationals were arrested coming into France from Casablanca with crystalline methamphetamine: in December 2017, January 2018 and February 2018, carrying 5 kg, 3.9 kg and 4.5 kg of the substance, respectively. In May 2018, a Moroccan national was arrested after arriving in France from Amsterdam with over 5 kg of amphetamine.

67. In order to support North African countries in reinforcing their response to cross-border trafficking, the UNODC Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa continued its work in several areas during the period 2017–2018. Strengthening of border controls and regional cooperation was given special attention, including through the further strengthening of container and airport controls and enhancing capacities to secure selected land border-crossing points and key hub cities along trafficking routes in the region. The strengthening of investigation capacities throughout the region, as a means of promoting intelligence-led investigations aimed at dismantling criminal networks, was another focus in that regard.

68. Towards the end of 2017, UNODC developed a comprehensive capacity-building approach covering Egypt, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia. The objective of the intervention was to further enable the countries to counter the growing challenges posed by organized criminal groups involved in migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons. That approach was aimed at helping authorities — in particular, relevant law enforcement agencies and criminal justice practitioners in those countries — to adopt a qualitative enforcement approach that focused on dismantling criminal networks. In order to achieve that, interventions were being focused on four areas that were of strategic importance to effectively tackling migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons to, through and from North Africa. Those thematic areas included: (a) strengthening identification and interception capacities at border crossings and in key hub cities along smuggling routes, including improved regional information-sharing and cooperation; (b) further improving the capacities of law enforcement officers and other relevant practitioners in the effective investigation of cases involving migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons, including a focus on assisting and protecting victims; (c) supporting the specialization of law enforcement agencies by establishing solid knowledge and skills on the use of special investigation techniques, including criminal intelligence analysis, forensics and digital forensics; and (d) further improving the capacities of justice practitioners in the effective prosecution and adjudication of cases involving migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons, including through regional and international cooperation. The implementation of the project was expected to begin in August 2018.

69. Under its regional project on land border control and regional cooperation, UNODC organized the first regional forum for North Africa and the Sahel on strengthening cooperation to combat trafficking and transnational organized crime, bringing together high-level delegations from Algeria, Burkina Faso, Chad, Libya, Mauritania, the Niger and Tunisia. During the forum, UNODC presented recent trends and developments related to terrorism and transnational organized crime — in particular, trafficking in drugs, firearms and human beings — affecting both regions, and discussed best practices for the effective countering of terrorism and transnational organized crime. Further, the participating countries analysed and identified existing regional operational cooperation mechanisms and explored ways to optimize their use. The technical and operational pillars analysed included: (a) regional customs cooperation, (b) the regional cooperation mechanism of the African Union Mechanism for Police Cooperation, (c) the G5 Sahel joint force (regional cooperation mechanism), and (d) regional cooperation on justice.

70. UNODC is also supporting the authorities of Algeria and Tunisia in establishing a new coordinated management approach for customs and police controls between the two countries with the objective of facilitating operational cooperation in combating cross-border criminal activities, including terrorist activities. Within this context,

UNODC is supporting the establishment of a regional model of operational coordination between the police force and customs of both countries. This model will facilitate joint police and customs border controls through standardized joint operational procedures, single customs controls, the exchange of information and data between border-crossing points, and the implementation of a model protocol agreement on coordinated management at border posts in both countries.

71. In addition to supporting cooperation between Algeria and Tunisia, UNODC provided capacity-building to the authorities in Algeria that was similar to what was provided earlier to Tunisia, thereby creating opportunities for further synergies. A training plan was developed on the basis of the Algerian context, including modules on risk indicators and their regular update, search techniques, debriefing methods, collection and transmission of evidence in accordance with criminal procedure, intelligence collection, management of informants, surveillance techniques and report drafting. Implementation of the training plan started in March 2018 with a training activity on fraud documents for 40 frontline officers from different airports, ports and land borders, as well as officers from the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Transportation, and customs. UNODC will also deliver document fraud detection equipment to be used at border crossing points.

72. Under the global Container Control Programme, UNODC continued supporting the Tanger Med and Casablanca seaports in Morocco. Cooperation also continued with Tunisia through support to the port control unit at the Port of Radès, which is tasked with profiling, targeting and inspecting high-risk containers and cargo being used by organized criminal groups for the transport of illicit goods, including for terrorism purposes. Tunisia has requested all maritime ports to join the Container Control Programme. The objective of the Programme is to strengthen the capacity of countries to profile, select and inspect high-risk containers and cargo, with a view to preventing trafficking and facilitating trade at the national and international levels. UNODC has received requests from several other countries in the region and is currently raising the funds necessary to include them in the programme.

73. In 2017 and 2018, the expansion of AIRCOP in North Africa continued to build capacities at selected international airports for the detection and interdiction of suspicious passengers and trafficking by passengers or using cargo and postal mail. A joint airport interdiction task force was established at Queen Alia International Airport in Amman. Morocco is an associate country to the project. Discussions are ongoing with Algeria and Tunisia to adapt implementation according to individual national contexts and needs.

74. Given that rates of HIV transmission and drug use are still on the rise in the region, UNODC will continue to support the development of laws, policies, strategies, guidelines and practices related to drug use prevention, treatment and care, as well as comprehensive packages of key HIV prevention, treatment and care interventions for people who inject drugs and people in prisons. Existing legislation, policies and practices are updated regarding scientific evidence on drug use, drug dependence and HIV, in line with international human rights obligations.

75. In 2017, UNODC launched a regional project on HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support in prison settings. Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia are the first three countries to participate in the project, which is the first project of its kind in the region. Through the initiative, access to infection control measures for tuberculosis, HIV, and hepatitis B and C will be provided to approximately 10,000 prisoners in three prisons in Egypt, approximately 18,000 female and male prisoners in five prisons in Morocco and approximately 10,000 female and male prisoners in four prisons, as well as two juvenile rehabilitation centres, in Tunisia. Rapid situation assessments have been conducted at all prisons that will receive assistance under the project to assess the infrastructure, equipment and available consumables, with a view to tailoring its technical assistance.

VIII. Conclusions and recommendations

76. On the basis of common and shared responsibility, countries in Africa should continue to take action against drug trafficking and organized crime through balanced and comprehensive responses. The transnational dimension of drug trafficking and organized crime underlines the need to strengthen regional cooperation in that regard. The main areas for enhanced cooperation should include increasing information exchange within the region, tackling financial flows linked to drug trafficking and preventing the diversion of precursor chemicals that are used to manufacture drugs.

77. In the light of the foregoing, States participating in the meeting may wish to consider the following:

(a) Developing regional strategies to counter drug trafficking that include linkages with other forms of organized crime, inter alia, trafficking in firearms and persons, for a better integrated response to the problem;

(b) Considering including cross-cutting issues, such as anti-corruption activities, in projects and strategies to counter trafficking;

(c) Calling upon UNODC to continue supporting countries undergoing political transitions and reforms in the field of criminal justice in general, and the law enforcement sector in particular, in order to ensure that the actions taken are based on the rule of law and respect for human rights;

(d) Inviting Governments to place increased emphasis on the dismantling of drug trafficking networks as a strategic approach in order to move beyond the seizures of drugs and arrests of low-level operatives, and in this regard, make more systematic use of criminal intelligence and request UNODC support as appropriate;

(e) Encouraging Governments to continue their engagement in the Airport Communication Project so as to strengthen the response against terrorism and trafficking threats to civil aviation;

(f) Supporting and expanding the implementation of the Container Control Programme in the Middle East and North Africa in order to facilitate international trade and prevent the exploitation of maritime containers for the purposes of trafficking, organized crime and terrorism;

(g) Promoting a balanced approach to drug control that also includes effective and sustainable drug demand reduction through the prevention of drug use, the provision of drug-dependence treatment and rehabilitation;

(h) Inviting States in the region to conduct national studies and assessments on drug-related issues and to work with UNODC in this regard, including on related capacity-building and information-gathering and analysis;

(i) Inviting States to develop and review alternative development initiatives, with support from international partners;

(j) Further promoting and enhancing national, cross-border and inter-agency cooperation in order to unify and strengthen border controls regionally and streamline the gathering and sharing of intelligence;

(k) Enhancing support for the regional development of memorandums of understanding for multilateral cooperation and information exchange and mutual legal assistance and considering concluding regional memorandums of understanding for cooperation and information exchange with major global and European-wide agencies, such as INTERPOL, the European Police Office, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) and Eurojust.